

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. This examiner's amendment is lieu of any previous examiner's amendment and is an amendment to the claims filed June 20, 2008.
2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Barry Kelmachter (Applicant's Attorney) on September 23, 2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claims 1 - 35 (cancelled)

36. (New) A removable gripping device for a container, comprising:

two members forming a gripper mounted on a gripping body in which one of the members forming a gripper is mobile and free to move in translation with respect to the gripping along a direction approximately parallel to a longitudinal direction of the gripping body between an open position and a closed position in which the members forming the gripper are adapted to grip an edge of the container, said gripping body having an internal cavity with a wall,

displacement means for displacing the members forming the gripper with respect to each other, said displacement means comprising a lever free to move in rotation with respect to the gripping body between an extended position and a retracted position in which the mobile member forming the gripper is in

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the closed position, and a transmission means extending between the lever and the mobile member forming the gripper adapted to displacing the mobile member forming the gripper in translation when the lever is pivoted, said displacement means being adapted to adjust a distance separating the two members forming the gripper in the closed position to a thickness of the gripped container when the lever is in the retracted position, and

a locking pin installed on the displacement means, said locking pin having a head defining its uppermost portion and a base defining its lowermost portion, a first spring disposed underneath the base, and when said lever is in said retracted position and the two members forming the gripper are in the closed position adjusted to the thickness of the gripped container, said locking pin is positioned within said cavity so that said head is brought in contact with said wall by the mobile member forming a gripper that is urged by a second spring.

37. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 36, wherein the housing has a through cross-section that depends on the position of the mobile member forming the gripper in the closed position.

38. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 36, wherein, when the lever is in the retracted position, the locking pin penetrates into a housing that comprises the cavity formed in the gripping body and a slot formed through the mobile member forming the gripper.

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39. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 37, wherein the through cross-section of the housing becomes larger when the two members forming the gripper become closer to each other when in the closed position.

40. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 36, wherein the locking pin is installed on the lever.

41. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 40, wherein the locking pin is installed free to move in translation with respect to the lever and a locking spring continuously tends to move the locking pin towards the direction of the housing.

42. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 36, wherein the wall of the cavity on which the locking pin bears in contact delimits the cavity in the direction of the members forming the gripper.

43. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 36, wherein the locking pin is flared from the head as far as the base through which the locking pin is connected to the displacement means.

44. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 43, wherein the locking pin is flared by a straight wall connecting the head to the base.

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45. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 43, wherein the locking pin is flared by a stepped wall consisting of several steps and connecting the head to the base.

46. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 36, wherein the displacement means are shaped such that the lever is in a stable equilibrium position when in the extended position and when in the retracted position, and the lever passes through an intermediate unstable equilibrium position when pivoting from one of the two stable equilibrium positions to the other.

47. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 36, wherein the second spring is housed in the transmission means and adapted to apply a force to the mobile member so as to adjust a distance separating the two members forming the gripper.

48. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 36, wherein the transmission means are formed from a connecting rod free to move in rotation with respect to the lever and to the mobile member forming the gripper.

49. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 48, wherein the connecting rod is mounted free to rotate on the lever about a shaft close to an end of the lever opposite an end through which the lever is connected to the gripping body.

50. (New) A removable gripping device according to claim 38, wherein the wall of the cavity on which the locking pin bears in contact delimits the cavity in the direction of the members

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forming the gripper, the locking pin pressed by a wall delimiting the slot in the direction opposite the direction of the members forming the gripper.

Conclusion

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to NED A. WALKER whose telephone number is (571)270-3545. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anthony Stashick can be reached on 571-272-4561. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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